would always be higher than the actual price. Further, the Government included the year 1095 as one of five years for which the average was worked out. In that year, the price was extraordinarily high because of the great European war. The price of paddy in Kuttanad then rose to 36 chs. a *para*, while at other times it was only 16 chs. In the circumstances, the rate of 6 fanams a *para* was very high and it should be reduced to 5 fanams a *para*. The loss in revenue on this account would be more than compensated by the savings under shortage in store, rent of granaries and cost of the *Kandukrishi* establishment.

His next prayer was for the change of the *kist* months from Medam and Edavam to Chingam, Kanni and Tulam as the price of paddy would be low in the months of Medam and Edavam.

In conclusion, the member said that he was only repeating what the ryots had already represented through memorials and resolutions at public meetings. The Government should not bring the scheme into force without reconsidering all aspects of the matter simply because a few ryots or representatives of the people had assented. The member was aware that the majority of the *Kandukrishi* tenants of Mavelikara and Kartikapalli had already accepted the commutation rate fixed by the Government. That was no criterion for accepting the rate because the conditions in those two taluks were different from those at Kuttanad where the price of paddy was much lower. Further, in the Mavelikara and Kartikapalli taluks the lands could be utilised for raising more than one cultivation annually, the crops were better and the rent comparatively lower.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Chandy Thomas, your suggestion now placed before the Government is in regard to the commutation, of the payment of tax in kind into payment in money, as per the current market rate. The Government were even more generous than you and have made the commutation on a rate below the market rate and fixed it at six fanams. You seem to suggest that the conditions of *Kandukrishi* lands in Kuttanad are very different from those in other places Let me assure you that the Government very carefully went into the whole question before fixing the rate. Anyway, the rate is subject to revision periodically, and so the revision of that rate will come up again soon.

In regard to the change of *kist* months, that is already engaging the attention of the Government, and the question has been referred to the Land Revenue Commissioner for his views. If possible, the Government will meet your wishes there.

As regards other points, I am awaiting certain reports. All your suggestions will be considered, although I am not now in a position to hold out any hopes.

8. Certain changes in the Revenue Administration.

MR. VARKI AIPORA (*Member, Vaikam taluk*) spoke about the necessity for changing the *kist* months from Tulam and Vrischikam to Vrischikam and Dhanu, respectively. In the month of Tulam, there was general scarcity of money in the Vaikam taluk and poor demand for cocoanuts. It was only by selling cocoanuts that the people in that taluk were paying the tax due from them. Very few people had sufficient paddy for sale.

The member next spoke about certain changes necessary in the existing arrangements for the registration of vital statistics. The existing system of registration was defective in that it was based on oral information furnished and was therefore unreliable. In view to ensure correctness of the statistics and make them more useful to the public, he suggested that legislation should be undertaken for maintaining in each Taluk office an up-to-date register showing the name, age, etc., of each member of every tax-paying family. Subsequent births or deaths should be intimated *in writing* to the Tahsildars concerned by the senior member of the family within a month of the event. The guardians of minors, and the major members of every family should have the power to have the names of the minors or majors, as the case may be, included in the register. Objections, if any, should be enquired into and disposed of. Those whose names were not so included should have no right whatsoever in the families concerned. Branches of families separated by partition should be separately entered. The scheme, if adopted, would prevent

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vexatious litigation. It would also debar strangers from setting up false claims to family property and prevent members of a family from trying to set aside any decision of a civil court in respect of their family property on the ground of minority.

The last point touched upon was the working of the Agricultural Loans Regulation and the Rules issued thereunder. The people were not deriving the full benefits intended by the Regulation and the Rules. Applications for loans were generally forwarded for enquiry to the subordinate officers of the Revenue Department, who had to be gratified by the applicants. By the time the enquiries were completed, the year would be far advanced and the budget allotments for loans would have been exhausted. In such cases, the applicants had to renew their applications in the next year and, by that time, the season for making the improvements intended would have passed. The member therefore suggested that it should be ruled that enquiries in respect of applications for loans should be made by an officer not below the rank of a Tahsildar and that they should be completed within a month. Applications pending at the end of any year should first be dealt with in the succeeding year. He suggested also that the maximum amount of loan which a Tahsildar could sanction should be raised from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Varki Aipora, your representation is noted. But I am afraid most of your proposals are too sweeping to be carried out.

9. Porambokes.

MR. KURIAKOSE CHACKO (*Member, Minachil taluk, Group I*) spoke about the working of the Land Conservancy Regulation by the Revenue Department and also suggested remedies for removing the hardships now entailed. Prior to the last Settlement, the boundaries of registered holdings were specifically defined in the *ozhukus* and the holders were enjoying the lands included within those boundaries. During the last Settlement, mistakes were committed in respect of the boundaries of lands adjoining rivers and canals. The areas mentioned in the old *ozhukus* were located without regard to the boundaries described therein, with the result that parts of registered holdings in the actual possession and enjoyment of the holders were treated as *porambokes*, regardless of the fact that there were permanent improvements such as cocoanut, jack and arecanut trees, many years old. Lands on the same level on the sides of rivers to the extent of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 *dandus* in width together with the trees thereon were thus classed as *porambokes*. It was very difficult to obtain copies of *ozhukus* from the Taluk offices for proving the original boundaries. The Taluk authorities generally told applicants for such copies that the *ozhukus* had been destroyed or misplaced. Unlike rich men, it was not possible for the poor ryots to sue the Government for the establishment of their rights and compel the production of the pre-Settlement records because of the difficulties and expenses incidental to such suits. In case the adjoining landholder wished to get the alleged *poramboke* registered, he could not ordinarily succeed especially if he happened to be poor. The poor landholders received a differential treatment from the rich at the hands of the subordinates of the Revenue Department. While the rich always managed to get such *porambokes* registered, the poor invariably failed ; and *poramboke* proceedings were also taken against the latter. The Government had, under date the 31st December, 1926, issued a set of new rules for the better protection of the people's interests and the proper conservancy of *porambokes*. But the difficulties of the ryots were chiefly the result of abuse of power by the subordinates. The superior officers could find neither the time nor the convenience to check the abuse by frequent local inspections. The Revenue subordinates were seldom transferred from their permanent stations; and as the records prepared by them were acted upon by the higher authorities, they had begun systematically to abuse the power vested in them.

In view to remove the defects pointed out, the member suggested the following measures :—

(1) Revenue subordinates should not be retained in any one taluk for more than three years.

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